

***Wheel Creek Rain Gardens/Rain Barrels
Demonstration Projects and Workshops
Draft Work Plan October 6, 2009***

For more information contact Beth Ebersole bebersole@dnr.state.md.us



Goal. Create a greater sense of stewardship within the community through an innovative rain garden/rain barrel program including rain garden and rain barrel give-a-ways, garden tours, and construction installation workshops.

Background. Recognizing the importance and necessity of involving the community in restoration, this proposal will initiate new and innovative approaches to engage citizens and businesses. This approach will be based on lessons learned by the Corsica River Conservancy (which found that a community is more likely to participate if they have personally seen or known someone who has had a rain garden installed).

Harford County DPW along with various partners will nominate 5-10 households, businesses, and/or public buildings for installation of rain gardens and rain barrels as demonstration sites. Sites will be selected based on existing gardens and maintenance, site visibility, site suitability, willingness to participate, and current engagement in Bush River or other conservation efforts.

Appropriate sites will “win” a rain garden (value of \$3,000¹), which will be installed by a Harford County DPW contractor and will include informational signage for educational purposes. One year after completion, a garden tour of the demonstration sites will take place. This time period will allow plants to become established and to give property owners experience in the amount of maintenance required. The last stop on the garden tour will be Harford Glen Environmental Education Center where informational packages and free giveaways will be available. Participants from the first year will be able to nominate others or interested parties can nominate themselves to “win” a rain garden for the following year. Installation of an additional 5-10 rain gardens followed by garden tours are also proposed for the second and third years.

A rain garden/rain barrel workshop will be advertised at the garden tour and will take place at Harford Glen Environmental Education Center or Emmorton Elementary School. During the first half of the workshop, participants will observe the installation of a rain garden and rain barrel. During the second half of the workshop, participants will assemble their own rain barrel and will be given guidance for their installation. This workshop will be free and will be limited to 20-30 participants. The status of the Wheel

¹ Need to verify if \$3,000 is adequate for a residential rain garden.

Creek Restoration Project will be highlighted during the workshop. Workshops are also proposed for the second and third years.

The following partners will assist Harford County DPW with the implementation of this proposed activity: CBNERR, Harford County Parks and Recreation/Anita C. Leight Estuary Center, Otter Point Creek Alliance, Harford Glen Environmental Education Center, Harford County Environmentality and Maryland Conservation Corp.

Timeline. Rain Gardens/Rain Barrels Demonstration Projects and Workshops Harford County DPW and its partners intend to begin searching for potential locations for the 5 – 10 demonstration rain gardens and rain barrels at the end of 2009 with installation of the selected locations in spring 2010. A demonstration installation workshop will be held at the library in March 2010. A garden tour of the rain gardens/rain barrels will take place in spring 2011 with an ongoing rain barrel installation demonstration at Harford Glen. An additional 5 – 10 demonstration rain garden/rain barrel sites will be installed in spring 2012 and again in 2013 for a total of 15 – 30 rain gardens installed. Additional workshops will be held if there is demand for these.